

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

BIRDS IN JAPAN: A FIELD GUIDE. 2nd printing (actually 2nd edition). By Yoshimaro Yamashina. Tokyo News Service, Tokyo, Japan, 1974: vii + 266 pp., 147 color figures, 3 black and white plates, 23 black and white photos, 22 figs. \$29.50.—A useful guide to the more common Japanese birds (314 out of 480+ species) as well as a good guide for planning a birding itinerary. The bulk of the book is carried over from the first edition and is composed of $\frac{1}{3}$ page color paintings of one or two species (with background), the rest of each page containing descriptive material under three headings: Recognition, Range and Habitat, and Habit. The 1st edition covered somewhat less than 200 species. In the 2nd edition, the additional 115 species are grouped into 15 new plates, without background, with abbreviated textual material on adjacent pages. The new plates have been inserted at appropriate places in the text, but a few species are separated from the rest of the family. The Wetmorean order of families has been followed.

The color plates are accurate and attractive, but only 10 species are illustrated in flight. Descriptions are good and contain pointers for distinguishing similar species. However, no mention is made of species not covered in this guide. The Range and Habitat, and Habit sections tell where and when a bird is likely to be found as well as some of its distinctive habits.

The introductory chapter provides enough information about climate, distribution and habitat of birds, migration and good birding areas to enable the user to plan his travel and birding in Japan. This chapter is far more extensive than most (if not all) field guides and provides a useful overview of avian distribution and its dynamics in Japan. Some 29 main birding areas, plus many supplemental places throughout Japan are discussed, including the dominant or most interesting birds and vegetation.

Unfortunately the binding of both copies I examined was beginning to come apart; the cover will soon separate from the book. There is a number of unimportant typographical errors.

The high price of this guide will restrict its sale appeal. Color figures on most pages and the heavy glossy paper are a bit lavish for a field guide with a limited market. Although this book has a complete list of Japanese birds in an appendix (those treated are not indicated), the traveller to Japan may also want the "Check-list of Japanese Birds" (1974, Ornithological Society of Japan, \$29.00) for its description of the range, occurrence and habitat of all species, and "Birds of Japan in Natural Colors" (K. Kobayashi, text in Japanese, with English and scientific names, about \$10.00) for its excellent color plates of all Japanese birds. This adds up to nearly \$70.00 for three books, whereas the whole of North America is covered with two Peterson guides and the Robbins guide for only \$20.00. The English speaking birder in Japan will find Dr. Yamashina's guide indispensable as well as attractive.—BEN KING.

FUNDAMENTALS OF ORNITHOLOGY, 2nd edition. By Josselyn Van Tyne & Andrew J. Berger. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1976: xviii + 808 pp. \$22.50.—Andrew J. Berger has prepared a new edition of this popular ornithological textbook first published in 1959. There are nearly 200 additional pages with reduced type size, resulting from considerable new text material, but much of the expansion is due to the increase in illustrations from 254 to 528. Although these are generally good, many of the photographs are somewhat blurred, lacking in contrast, or only vaguely related to the text.